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# Moscow Sets Expulsion of 6 Frenchmen

## *Move Follows Ouster Of Soviets in Paris*

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Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, April 4—The Soviet Union today ordered two French diplomats and a French businessman out of the country and said that two other diplomats and a business official will be expelled later.

The expulsions come three days after three Soviets were expelled from France on charges of involvement in space espionage.

They were announced to Yves Pagniez, the French ambassador to the Soviet Union, in a meeting at the Soviet Foreign Ministry today.

A senior Foreign Ministry official told Pagniez that the six were being asked to leave for "activities incompatible with their official status," diplomatic terminology usually used to indicate spying charges.

France expelled the three Soviets for "activities unconnected with their mission and status" after French officials discovered a spy ring attempting to steal secrets of the European Ariane rocket.

The Soviet Union considers the French action "an openly unfriendly step obviously of political nature, aimed at poisoning the atmosphere of Soviet-French contacts," the Soviet news agency Tass said.

Moscow has also vigorously denied involvement in alleged espionage at the space center where the Ariane is being developed.

The expulsions have soured relations between Paris and Moscow a month before French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac is scheduled to visit the Soviet Union. If France retaliates by expelling other Soviets, a counter-retaliation from Moscow could be expected, western diplomats said.

In late 1982, when France expelled 47 Soviets from its embassy in Paris, the Soviet Union expelled no Frenchmen from Moscow.

Tass tonight blamed France for the "negative consequences of the affair" and urged Paris to halt "its attempts to put up artificial obstacles" to French-Soviet relations.